



# Erie County Department of Senior Services

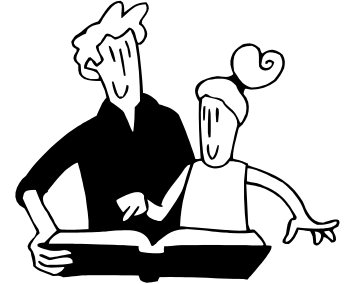
**For Immediate Release – 3/05**

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## **Senior Volunteers Needed to Make a Difference in a Child's Life!**

The ability to read is basic to learning and a prerequisite skill for student achievement. It is also of immeasurable importance to self-esteem and being able to participate fully in our society. Consider these sobering statistics:

- ✓ Over 50% of children entering Pre-Kindergarten in the Buffalo Public Schools were assessed as being already at risk of illiteracy (October 2003 Brigrance assessment)
- ✓ Two-thirds (66%) of 4<sup>th</sup> graders in Buffalo Public Schools are not reading at grade level; by 8<sup>th</sup> grade 74% are not reading at grade level, as measured by NY State's English Language Arts tests.



Fortunately, tutors can make a difference. Not only are they able to improve children's literacy skills by providing individualized instruction, they also become a reliable adult presence--in some cases, the only consistent adult relationship--in the lives of the children they tutor. Our tutors derive benefits as well--immeasurable satisfaction and pleasure from making a significant difference in the lives of children who are eager to improve their reading skills.

### **Here's how you can help....**

#### **GOOD SCHOOLS FOR ALL**

*Good Schools* has developed and implemented a structured tutoring program to respond to the significant achievement gap among Buffalo's public school children. Working hand in hand with selected Buffalo schools, we are seeking tutors to work with children in their respective schools from 9:30-11:30 am twice a week during the school year. Tutors will work with children either one-on-one, or in small groups. We are asking tutors to make a minimum commitment of at least one semester (October through mid-December or January through May); although a commitment for the full academic year would be preferred.

#### **LITERACY VOLUNTEERS OF BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY**

The Literacy Volunteers' Reading and Social Skills Youth Mentoring program is a new innovative partnership with the Enterprise Charter School, which seeks to improve the reading and social skills of at-risk students in grades four through eight. Youth Mentors are assigned to a specific child at Enterprise Charter School, which is located at 275 Oak Street in Buffalo. Mentors work with their student in a one-to-one tutoring session at the school weekdays (Monday through Friday) from 7-9am or from 3:30-7pm. Volunteers are asked to commitment to 2 hours a week for a 12-month commitment. Volunteers are accepted all year long.

If you --or someone that you know --is interested in either one of these programs, please call the Retired & Senior Volunteer Program at 858-7548. RSVP connects volunteers age 55 and over with various opportunities to help throughout the community.

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